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POOR TASTE, IF NOT BAD JUDGMENT.



NY man who is entrusted with a station of honor and responsibility should carefully consider all the bearings of a decision before he makes it, and if it is probable that to do the very thing which he would wish is likely to cause more disturbance than it is to effect good, the smoothest way out of his embarrassment is to back out of it and pass around the object. The Mr. Rowland, director of the Archives of Mississippi, who made such a mess of his popular vote for the names of ten prominent figures in the state's history whose portraits are to adorn the Hall of Fame in the new capitol building, seems to hop from one blunder to another. His latest is to declare his intention to add to the gallery in the hall of fame the portrait of Abraham Lincoln, and let it be placed beside that of Jefferson Davis. For this declaration Mr. Rowland has brought down upon his head the wrath of a good portion of the press of the state, and rekindled a fire of sad memories which the South has been trying to lay aside and relegate to oblivion as far as possible. There is perhaps not a paper in the state better prepared to speak without prejudice in this matter than is THE MESSENGER. Its editor from earliest childhood was surrounded with all the environments calculated to cause him to revere the very name of Lincoln. Yet, we can say without hesitation and without blush that we do not believe Mr. Rowland could have made a more serious mistake than he has in this suggestion.

The Hall of Fame in the state house at Jackson is designated as a place calculated to display to the visitor's view the portraits of men famous in the history of Mississippi. Jefferson Davis was a resident Mississippian. His portrait could not be omitted from the display. In all the trials through which the state passed in those dark days that can never be forgotten, though perfect recovery in a material way may sometime come, Davis was the idol of this people. During those same dark days the fates so adjusted issues that Abraham Lincoln was the frontpiece of that section and the director of those people whose stubborn purposes and great numbers enabled them to not only humiliate, but to crush, for the time, the state of Mississippi and its people, together with all its sister states of the South. While the hate so naturally engendered against that force and the man who directed it, may soften as the years roll by, it is not probable that during the lifetime of any one now living in the state, will the people of Mississippi be ready to adorn their Hall of Fame with the portrait of any one whose hand they felt so strongly during his life.

There are certain social and sectional opinions held by every Southern man, and in no state are they more fixed and imperishable than in our own Mississippi, which are diametrically opposite to the views held and contended for by Abraham Lincoln. It is not only folly to think of such a move as that suggested by the Custodian of the Archives, in the face of these differences, but silly. It could not have been more out of taste if, acting upon the personal wishes of the present Governor and his brother-in-law Wilson, Mr. Rowland had suggested the displaying of the portrait of the present miscarriage occupying the seat once filled by Mr. Lincoln, so far as counter tastes and prejudices go. It matters not that the circumstances of the hour may have caused Lincoln to oppose the South on the question of social equality, and that it seems to have been a matter of taste with the present executive, the effect is one and the same to a people who do not believe there can be any such order established on earth, for both were and are of the same party against which the South has always been forced to contend and suffer because of the great odds in its favor.

What does the Custodian at Jackson suppose would be the result if the historian of Kansas placing the portrait of Jefferson Davis in the Hall of Fame at Topeka, its state capital? How long does he suppose such a portrait would remain there side by side of the life size picture of John Brown?

The ruling spirits of the party Lincoln gave this country to dominate it nationally pretend to be in favor of social equality. Mississippi and the entire South are and ever will be opposed to it, without regard to political affiliations.

This is a great country of ours. It is big enough and strong enough and grand enough for each and every one of its states to have their own private

likes and dislikes. The nation can never become so big that these privileges will be denied or obliterated. The one section has its kindly feelings for the sorrows of another section, but it cannot be expected to lay aside all its nurtured ideas and idols, and adopt those of the other against which it has been compelled to contend so much.

Let the Hall of Fame remain, as it is intended to be, a place for Mississippians. Lincoln was never in any way identified with the history of Mississippi, and his picture has no place for it in the state house, no matter what he may have been to another section or to the country as a whole.

The fellows at Jackson, who are trying to spring something new on this state every few days, under whose influence Mr. Rowland must be to more or less degree, will pass from the scene of action, and their follies can be forgiven, if not forgotten, if they do not carry their experiments so far as to enrage a patient and enduring people who have placed them there.

MEN WHO PREY ON WOMEN.

By Horatio Purdy.



ALTHOUGH not essentially of American origin, the grafter has obtained in this hemisphere a position of such importance that he completely overshadows his European prototype. As an essential part of the social cosmogony of the United States he demands recognition in a sociological sense, whether his field of operations be the such-and-such-a set at Newport or the poor ignorant denizens of New York's East Side lazaretto, upon whom he preys with a wantonness that amazes of cruelty.

There is one side of the grafter's life about which we see little in the newspapers, for the very good reason that the victims of this sleek, debonaire counterfeit of manliness and decency, generally elect to pay the price and suffer in silence rather than expose his villany and their own weakness as a necessary condition.

The grafter who makes a specialty of women has a thousand ways of bringing to his net the gullible members of the fair sex.

One of his most common methods is that of posing as a candidate for matrimony, and if he is of presentable appearance, well schooled in the art of flattery and of good style, he may travel from Maine to California on his "shape" leaving in his wake a trail of more or less bruised hearts and accumulating a more or less plethoric bank account.

Probably the most lucrative field outside the matrimonial is the sporting. The freedom which the grandstand permits of between men and women and the opportunities which it offers for forming acquaintances are irresistible temptations to the grafter. The green woman sport is a positive gold mine to him, for she is so pleasantly confiding and is only too glad to intrust her bets to a man to place. Then there's loans to be repaid when luck comes the grafter's way, and many another scheme for wheedling the dollars out of the new friend's pocket.

Another prolific field for this class of grafter is the woman with a passion for the stage.

There is no time in the history of New York when there are not a dozen or more traps neatly set for women with the ambition to become theatrical stars, and the money to carry it out.

These women are generally attracted by specious advertisements in the newspapers, announcing the forthcoming production of a society play. A woman of social standing is needed for the stellar role, and her opportunity to win fame and fortune is assured.

This is a very alluring kind of bait, and generally brings forward several women who have long secretly cherished hopes of getting on the stage. Often the woman is married and she wants everything kept strictly secret. Plenty of money is forthcoming, but hubby must never know what it is being used for until the fateful night has arrived and the patiently sought success won.

This kind of a client is the very best that is available for the purposes of the grafter. There is no question whatever about any quarrel over expense when the inevitable happens, and so after the game has been played to its limit and the chicken sufficiently plucked the manager suddenly has a call out of town and the little farce that has been enacted in his office comes to an abrupt conclusion.

Of course, in many cases, productions are made, and the game is carried merrily along. Manager and star combine to use their influence with wealthy hubby, and his leg is pulled assiduously so long as there is any possibility of making believe that the victim has talent or the public any further forbearance.

There are two ways of working this kind of graft. There is the straight-laced manager, who is all business and who is sure that he has picked up a star accidentally, and whose faith in her never wanes until her last dollar is gone, and there is the less astute grafter, who makes very little effort to work the legitimate side of the scheme, and only object under any would-be star's funds to his own pocket book. The habitat of this undoubted bird of prey in any of the large cities, for a change of climate is often found desirable by him, and his victims are as easily secured in San Francisco as they are in New

York. Many of the dupes of these bogus managers never dream that they have been the victims of a confidence game, but attribute their failure of bad luck, and promise themselves a change of fortune later.

After the dramatic fakir or grafter, the most pretentious and dangerous pirates of these pleasant waters is the broker grafter.

Within the last decade the number of women who have broken away old traditions and become operators on "the street" is phenomenal. It does not take a woman long either to learn the trick of the trade or to become a shorn lamb, but there are "ten-derfeet" feeling their way into the mysteries of Wall street every day. These women are the grafter's prey, and have furnished the material for many a subsequent exposure and hasty flight to bournes unknown.

The men who carry on this class of fraud are the most adroit scoundrels in the profession, have probably done larger things in their time than swindle women. They have been in stock deals where millions were involved, and when dirty had to be done for the kings of finance, who would never soil their own reputations by appearing in the role that had

These men are astute, polished men of the world. to be played. They have nice homes near the park or on Riverside Drive, if not on Murray Hill. They are, more or less, in society, and the victim is often admitted to the circle of stylish acquaintances. Theater parties are arranged, and their confidence is gradually won. Meanwhile the grafter has his book carefully made up, and the victim is led on to the point of putting up a few hundreds on sugar, oil, or any of the stocks that vary frequently and considerably in value.

There is a month or two of alternate successes and failure, during which the investments grow larger and larger to cover margins, and finally the end comes, the victim is informed that all her margin has been wiped out, and, a sadder and wiser woman, she returns to her pet amusements, if luckily she is not shorn of her last dollar and has to accept a position, probably that of servant to some social snob who makes her life a martyrdom. The alternate choice, not infrequently selected, is suicide.

The most dangerous class of grafters in connection with the plundering of women are the men who manage to get themselves appointed executors or guardians for women who have been left fortunes. The fees of these offices should be sufficient to guarantee the honesty of the men so entrusted with the care of the money of others; but they do not prove so, and the average woman's proverbial incompetence in financial affairs makes it easy to take advantage of her.

A favorite method of working this graft is to induce the victim to change the character of her investment. A widow, who for instance has been left a snug fortune in government bonds, or in good railway stock, will be tempted by her "guardian" on the ground of making twice the interest, to sell this stock and reinvest. Of course the "guardian" is financially interested in this new stock and the chances are that about half the total of the widow's fortune becomes his through the transfer. Sometimes the result is much more ruinous to her. Often the "guardian" has little private ventures of his own in which he induces her to invest, and generally with the final result that she ultimately has the choice of taking what small amounts he can dole out to her in the way of an allowance, or of having him locked up, and thus putting an end to any supplies at all.

I know a woman today who is scrubbing floors for a living, whose husband died ten years ago leaving her a fortune of \$100,000 in United States bonds.

She commenced her experiences as "angel" to a theatrical company, expecting to become another Mrs. Leslie Carter. A year or two of this amusement, ending with her disgust of stage life on account of the unwelcome advances made to her by her manager, resulted in reducing her funds considerably.

Her remaining thousands went at the advice of her executors, into a well known speculative stock, boosted by politicians, which is now worth about as much as Confederate bonds.

Compared with the grafter who preys on his own sex, or the poor illiterate who deforms himself to win a few pennies from the sympathetic East Sider, these heartless scoundrels who prey upon the credulity of the "weaker" sex are a nameless abomination, and should be hunted down remorselessly by the strong arm of the law.

Frenchman has invented a noiseless gun. Now if it is also bulletless, it is to be hoped that it will be introduced in America this Xmas to take the place of the old-time fussy and dangerous weapons—the air gun and toy pistol, for instance.

William J. Bryan has moved into a new \$20,000 brick farm house which he has christened "Fairview." He is reputed to have an income of \$50,000 a year in sound money.

If all the little helpless states that England jumped onto in the past could combine against her, they could put her out of business in a hurry.

John Bull is a bully. He never picks a fuss with anybody of his size. He subsides in the presence of the "bear that walks like a man."

A London newspaper has recently been investigating the "learning of kings" and informs its readers that the monarchs of the Old World are more sapient than they are generally supposed to be. "It is quite possible," says our English contemporary, "that at the rate at which the education of royalties is now going on they will, as a class, be the most intelligent in Europe." It is inferred from the statements of the London newspaper that Kaiser Wilhelm is omniscient; that the Czar of Russia, although a very modest young man, is a walking encyclopedia, and that the King of Italy is a phenomenon. The Italian sovereign, it is stated, has an embarrassing habit of reading up on a subject and then inviting some specialist of renown to come over to the palace and "swap ideas" with him. The result is that the king talks like a phonograph which had been fed on encyclopedias and the specialist goes away marveling at his wisdom. The wife of the King of Portugal is a graduate in medicine and could earn her own living as a "lady doctor" if her husband were to lose his job. It is gratifying to learn that European royalties are making good use of their opportunities and improving their minds. They have not, as a rule, been distinguished in the past for phenomenal intellectual development. The London newspaper refrains from making any statements in regard to King Edward's erudition. Probably he is a prodigy of intellect, like the rest of the Old World rulers, but is too modest to let his subjects know how wise and learned he really is.

The United States government is indefatigable in pursuing those who transgress its laws, and Kansas offers a case in point. Some months ago a farmer in Smith county answered an advertisement in a matrimonial paper which described a beautiful and accomplished maiden who was sighing for a husband. The home of this damsel was in Washington state at a little town called Krupp, not far from Seattle, and when the courtship had progressed up to the point of an engagement the Kansas man was induced to send her money with which to pay railroad fare from Seattle to Smith Center. But after sending the money he was unable to get even a line from his lady love and at last he turned the matter over to postoffice authorities who quickly discovered that the alleged damsel was a young man with whiskers on his face—one R. P. Haskin, who was taken into custody on the charge of using the mails with intent to defraud. At his preliminary examination in Seattle the young man was bound over to appear in the United States court at Topeka and he will be brought to Kansas by a United States officer. When arrested, young Haskin declared that he had been carrying on the correspondence with the Kansas man as a joke and had no intention of robbing him of his money. But the fact remains that he did rob his victim and for this he must answer.

Young men dream. They dream and they fancy themselves immortal. They dream and they fancy themselves infallible. They dream and the heaven of love opens its pearly gates to them, they dream and the dizzy heights of eminence and fame rise before their eyes, they dream and dream and dream, and how often their dreams come true only to confuse and to baffle the awakening! And yet, except that the dreams of yesterday become sometimes the realities of tomorrow, where would the world be? It is the ideal that, though it never be reached, still lifts us out of the gutters and mounts us to the skies. He that is no longer young may count himself happy if the vanished ideals of his youth are not succeeded by the cynicisms of satiety, or worse, by the rank infidelity of broken vows and desecrated shrines. In public affairs, in private life the lode-star should be this latter, because, though the ideal be never quite attained, he that most nearly approaches it will have least to regret. Let us bear it in mind that Moses was permitted to see, but not to enter, the promised land.

Mr. Grover Cleveland has again appeared at a public meeting, this time as its presiding officer. The frequency with which the president is showing himself lately, when contrasted with his previous habits of seclusion, can lead to but one conclusion, and that is that he has an object in view. A man of his temperament, who has been twice president, would hardly aspire to anything below that position. It can scarcely be doubted therefore that Mr. Cleveland is a party to a plan on the part of the trusts to elect him to the presidency, in the event that it is found impossible to prevent the nomination of President Roosevelt.

It is more than likely that England and Germany will imitate the coal barons and declare there is nothing to arbitrate in the Venezuelan affair. If Castro could only secure the services of George Dewey instead of Minister Bowen the result might be different.

It is just as well that Castro's navy is at the bottom of the sea. It would have proven a useless expense in case of war.

Exchanges refers to a murder as a grave crime. The adjective appears to be unnecessary.

England denies having any part in sinking the Venezuelan navy. It is another case of poor Tray.